1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Saramacca

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Bayo and Tross.

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Bow and arrow used for shooting large fish.

[Facing p. 303]

(Facing page 302)

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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226 The most primitive way of fishing, among the Bush Negroes, is with the bow and arrow. It takes a steady arm and eye. The fish arrow has a barbed point, which, besides being [227 411] glued on the shaft with gum, is tied to the centre of the shaft by a string of singrassi. When the fisher sights along the shaft and lets fly, skilfully impaling a fish just under the surface of the water, the point of the arrow may break off, but the string retains the shaft. It threshes around in the water behind the wounded fish, marking its location.

226 825 The Djukas are clever folk. One species of fish, the *cumaru*, feeds on the seed of a certain tree, the *walaba*, that grows by the river bank. When the seed-pod of this tree is ripe, it explodes with a loud *pop!* For the fish this sound is associated with the falling of the seed into the water. They swim toward the sound to find and eat the seed. To attract these fish the Djukas imitate with a slap of the hands the noise of the cracking pod. The cumaru draw toward the spot, where the fisher is waiting with poised arrow. The result is more fish for the evening pot.

226 [227] The women have a way of fishing in which they knock the bottom from a bottle and put crumbs of cassava into it, up near the neck. The trap is placed beside the bank, in shallow water where it can be watched. Minnows enter the submerged bottle after the crumbs, and the waiting women snatch out the bottle before the fish can escape. These minnows belong to the Rosy Barb species, highly prized by collectors of tropical fish.

[227] Other traps are carefully constructed of bamboo slats and

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reeds, to catch the *dahgo fissee* or *snakee fissee*—in other words, the dog fish and the eel. Trapped under water, these fish are easy prey to the savage piraya, so other devices are also used. A baited hook is attached to a bankside shrub called *mucca mucca* (*Montrichardia sp.*), the stalk of which is bent over and fixed beneath the water, under a constant strain. The hold is very slight—a hair-trigger tension—so that as soon as the fish snatches the bait the slight movement frees the bent stalk, whipping the fish free of the water.

There is a plant used by the Negroes to poison fish. The juice of the *nekku* (*Longchocorpus densiflorus* or *rufescens*) has an active alkaloid principle that is stupefying in its effect. It is called *yarro conali* by the Indians. Baskets full of nekku are carried to a small creek. The Djukas sit on the bank, beating the plant into pulp with carved wooden flails. Juice from the bruised shrub poisons the water, and the fish succumb, floating belly up, so that they can be scooped out with a dip-net. Often we passed Djuka tribesmen carrying baskets of this deadly plant toward some quiet stream.

In time of drought it often happens that fish are landlocked between sandbars. It is then an easy matter to scoop them out with a dip-net. Piraya are fished for with a hook and line, with a wire leader obtained in Paramaribo. A piece of bloody meat is used as bait, and the line is trolled. As soon as a fish is felt the rod is whipped overhead, throwing the fish up on the bank. Even out of water the piraya's jaws are still dangerous and avoided.

Gill nets are useless because there are too many predatory

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226 227 animals in the water. The catch would be consumed before it could be taken up. Besides spring-traps that snap shut when the bait is touched, cone-traps are used, similar to those of more northern waters. The fish pokes his way into a concave cone, at the end of which is an opening guarded by bristles. Going in, the bristles are easily pushed aside, but, coming out, they bar the path. Then, say the Bush Negroes, the fish speaks to the trap as follows:

"Matti, opa duro gimme"—"Friend, open the door."

But the trap replies: *"Matti, me na cong tia massra de habbe nassloto cun, dassa ope na da you"*—"Friend, I can't until master who has the key comes; he will open it for you."

262 264 Fish form a large part of the Djuka diet, and fishing is carried on by women, men, and children indifferently. When our canoe paddlers bring in some fish, they get out their [252 little black gipsy pot, add whole peppers, and boil the fish 263] as it is. It is then eaten like corn-on-the-cob. The head, especially, is a delicacy, the bones being crunched audibly and with gusto. The meat goes in one side of a Bush Negro mouth and the bones seem to come out the other. If a halt is called in the business of eating, it is only long enough to say: *"Fissee makee bon sweetee muffo"*—"Fish make good eating," i. e. make good sweet mouth.

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The decoration of
177 objects with cowrie shells comes by way of Africa. The
[329] monkey dance said to be practised by the Djukas is described
[796] as similar to the gorilla dance of the West Coast. The coiled wire bracelets and anklets are of African design, and the
[301 291] general mode of dress is the same.

The Djuka attitude toward the silk-cotton tree is common among the tribes of the Guinea Coast. "Throughout West
[824] Africa from Senegal to the Niger the silk-cotton tree is regarded with reverence and believed to be the abode of a god or spirit. This general consensus of opinion is no doubt due to the stupendous size attained by some of these trees, which tower far above all others of the forest."

[524] *Adji-boto,* a game in which seeds are placed in round holes in a board, is played not only by the Bush Negroes but also by the Town Negroes of Paramaribo; it is found along the Gold Coast, Benin, Sierra Leone, West Sudan, and, in modified forms, in many other parts of Africa. The fish spear
● [227] of the Djukas is found in Liberia, Mandingo, and the Gold Coast. Shooting fish with a bow and arrow is an African
[226] custom, but it is also widespread among the aboriginal Indians of South America. On the other hand, according to Dr. W. Roth of Demerara, a number of traps and hunting devices now used by the Guiana Indians are of African origin and have been borrowed from the Negroes.

[372] The Djuka fire fan, woven of split rattan, is borrowed from the Arawak Indians, but different types of the same device can be found also among the Tshi- and Ewe-speaking people and in Liberia, Cameroons, etc. The Bush Negro